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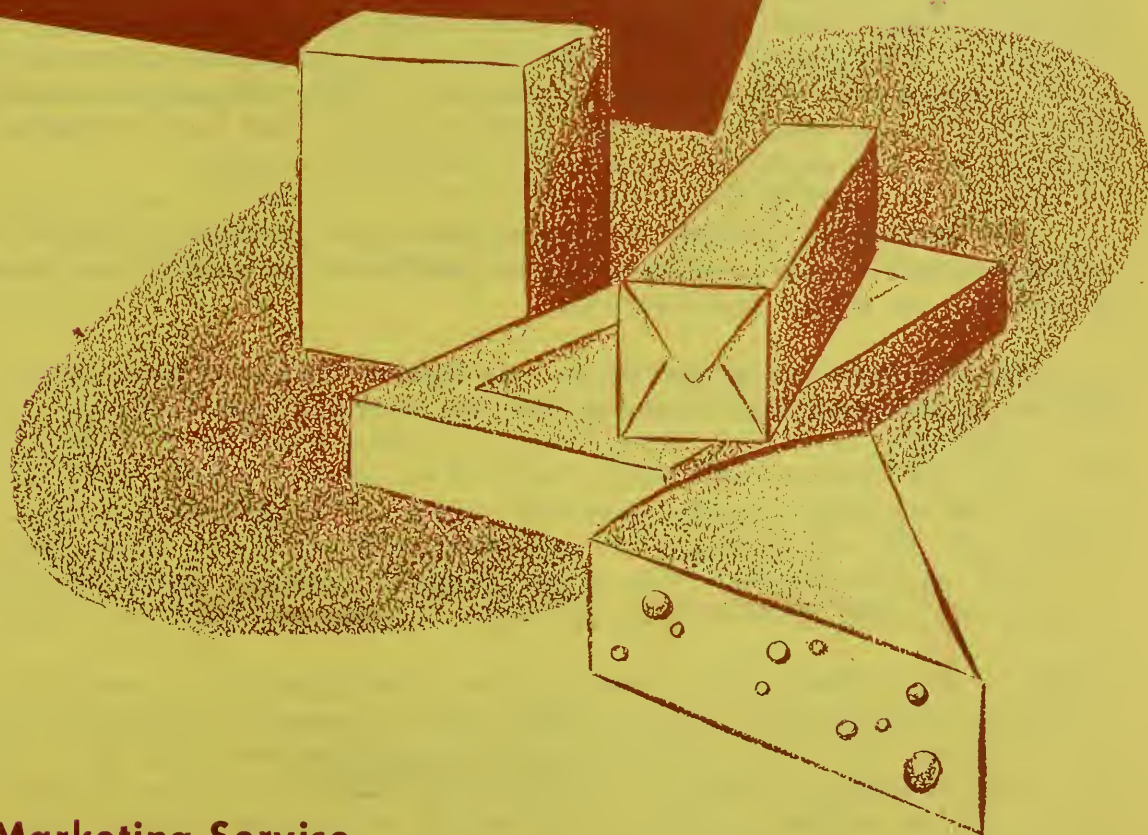
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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Household Purchases of Butter, Cheese, Nonfat Dry Milk Solids, and Margarine, February 1956



HPD - 23

April 1956

Agricultural Marketing Service

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

WASHINGTON, D. C.

Agriculture-Washington

PREFACE

This is one in a series of monthly reports, the first of which was published for April 1954, showing estimates of current household purchases and related information for butter, cheese, nonfat dry milk solids, and margarine. This series is based on information obtained in a cooperative project financed by the United States Department of Agriculture and by the dairy industry through the American Dairy Association. The Department funds are provided under the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (RMA, Title II).

The basic data presented herein were collected by the Market Research Corporation of America from its National Consumer Panel and were tabulated by it, under contract with the Department. The data beginning April 1954 are based on reports from a sample of approximately 5,800 families. Additional data on butter and margarine only for the months April 1953-March 1954 are also available. The data prior to April 1954 were based on a sample of about 4,300 families and were adjusted to the level currently reported from the 5,800-family sample.

The estimates include only purchases for consumption by household consumers and do not reflect volume purchased by hotels, restaurants, hospitals, or other institutions.

This report was prepared in the Market Development Branch of the Marketing Research Division, Agricultural Marketing Service.

HOUSEHOLD PURCHASES OF BUTTER, CHEESE, NONFAT DRY
MILK SOLIDS, AND MARGARINE, FEBRUARY 1956

The data in this report are estimates of total purchases by household consumers only, and do not include consumption in restaurants, hotels, hospitals, or other institutional outlets. Data for a month are for a 4-week period (28 days) in order to permit comparisons of purchase volume between periods of equal length.

SUMMARY

United States householders bought about 5 percent more butter but 4 percent less margarine in February 1956 than in February 1955. This marked a continuation of the 22 month trend in which householders bought more butter than in the same month a year earlier. Margarine purchases for household use from October 1955 through February 1956 were below the same months a year earlier, following 12 months in which they had been larger.

Householders also reported slightly larger purchases of natural cheese products in February 1956 than a year earlier, while purchases of processed cheese products were smaller. Cottage cheese purchases for home use were larger than in the same month of 1955. February 1956 was the first month in the April 1955-February 1956 period during which total purchases of nonfat dry milk solids for home use were less than a year earlier.

These indications of change are based on estimated monthly household purchase volumes by a representative nationwide sample of 5,800 families who report on a continuing basis, their weekly purchases of food and other household products.

Butter: Total purchases of butter for household use during the 4-week period of February 1956 were reported at just over 67 million pounds, compared with almost 64 million pounds in the 4-week period of February 1955. More families bought butter in February 1956 than a year earlier; over 46 percent of all families made a butter purchase, about 2 percent more than in the same month of 1955. The frequency of purchase per buying family during February 1956 was somewhat higher than a year earlier, while the size of purchase was about the same as reported in February 1955 (table 1).

Butter purchases by householders during the 11-month period April 1955-February 1956 were about 5 percent larger than in the corresponding period a year earlier. In the previous year April 1954-March 1955, household purchases of butter were 13 percent larger than in April 1953-March 1954. The average price paid by consumers for butter in the 11 months ending February 1956 was about the same as a year earlier, while for the period April 1954-March 1955 the price was about 10 percent lower than in April 1953-March 1954.

Purchases of butter for household use increased about 1 million pounds from January to February 1956. The change in butter purchases for home use from January to February in 1953 and 1954 was downward--about 3 million and 1.5 million pounds, respectively.

Margarine: The estimated total purchase volume of margarine for household use during February 1956 was 99 million pounds, 4 million pounds less than the purchase level reported in February 1955. Fewer families were buying margarine than a year earlier, and the reported figure of 60 percent of the families making a margarine purchase in February 1956 reflected a drop of about 5 percent from February 1955. As was noted in previous months, families buying margarine bought less frequently than a year earlier but were buying larger average amounts per purchase (table 2).

During April 1955-February 1956, household purchases of margarine were about 3 percent larger than in the corresponding period a year earlier. This was close to the percentage change in home use as indicated for April 1954-March 1955 compared with the previous year. Consumers in this survey reported paying about 6 percent less for margarine during the 11 months ending February 1956 than in April 1954-February 1955. In the year April 1954-March 1955, they had reported paying about the same for margarine as a year earlier.

The level of household purchases for margarine in February 1956 was almost the same as in January 1956. A constant purchasing level from January to February was also reported during 1953 and 1954.

About 18 percent of all families reported buying both butter and margarine in February 1956, while about 12 percent bought neither. This indicated a drop of 2 percentage points for the families buying both products in February 1956, compared with the same month a year earlier, but an increase of about 1 percentage point for families buying neither product.

Cheese: Total household purchases of natural and processed cheese products (purchased weight basis) in February 1956 were estimated at 53.3 million pounds compared with 55.9 million pounds a year earlier. The total for February 1956 reflects an increase of 800,000 pounds in natural cheese purchases from a year earlier but a drop of 3.5 million pounds in total processed cheese purchases.

Natural cheese purchases by householders during February 1956 were estimated at 30.5 million pounds, about 3 percent more than a year earlier. Purchases of all types of natural cheese except "other" which includes foreign and speciality types were higher than a year earlier. Purchases of American cheese, the type most commonly bought, were reported at 18.5 million pounds during February 1956, the highest level reported in the 23 months for which data are available. For the 11 months ending February 1956, total natural cheese purchases for home use were reported almost 5 percent greater than in April 1954-February 1955 (table 4).

Total processed cheese purchases for household use in February 1956--including processed cheese, cheese spreads, and cheese foods--were reported at 22.8 million pounds, down about 13 percent from February 1955. Purchases of all types of processed cheese products were smaller than a year earlier, with the declines ranging from 2 percent for cheese spreads to 31 percent for cheese foods. For the April 1955-February 1956 period, total purchases of processed cheese products for home use were reported about 15 percent less than in the same period a year earlier (table 5).

Cottage cheese purchases, which are not included in the totals above, were reported at 40.3 million pounds in February 1956 compared with 38.2 million pounds in February 1955. The 5-percent gain during February 1956 over February 1955 was the greatest year-to-year change in the period April 1955-February 1956. For the 11 months as a whole, the purchase level was about the same as during April 1954-February 1955.

Purchases of cottage cheese for home use increased about 6 million pounds from January to February 1956 compared with an increase of just over 3 million pounds from January to February in 1955. Householders in this survey continued to report little change in cottage cheese prices. Consumers also indicated that they were buying more cottage cheese per purchase than a year earlier (table 6).

Nonfat Dry Milk Solids: Household purchases of nonfat dry milk solids during February 1956 totaled 13.4 million pounds, just below the level reported in February 1955. This marked the only drop reported from the same month a year earlier in the period April 1955-February 1956. Last summer, consumers had reported buying about 25 percent more nonfat dry milk solids than in the summer of 1954. For the period April 1955-February 1956, purchases of nonfat dry milk solids for home use were about 18 percent larger than in April 1954-February 1955.

Consumers in this survey reported paying 39.5 cents per pound for nonfat dry milk solids in February 1956. This was almost 1 cent per pound less than a year earlier but virtually unchanged from the preceding month. The trend, started in October 1955, in which householders have reported larger average size purchases than a year earlier was continued in February 1956 (table 7).

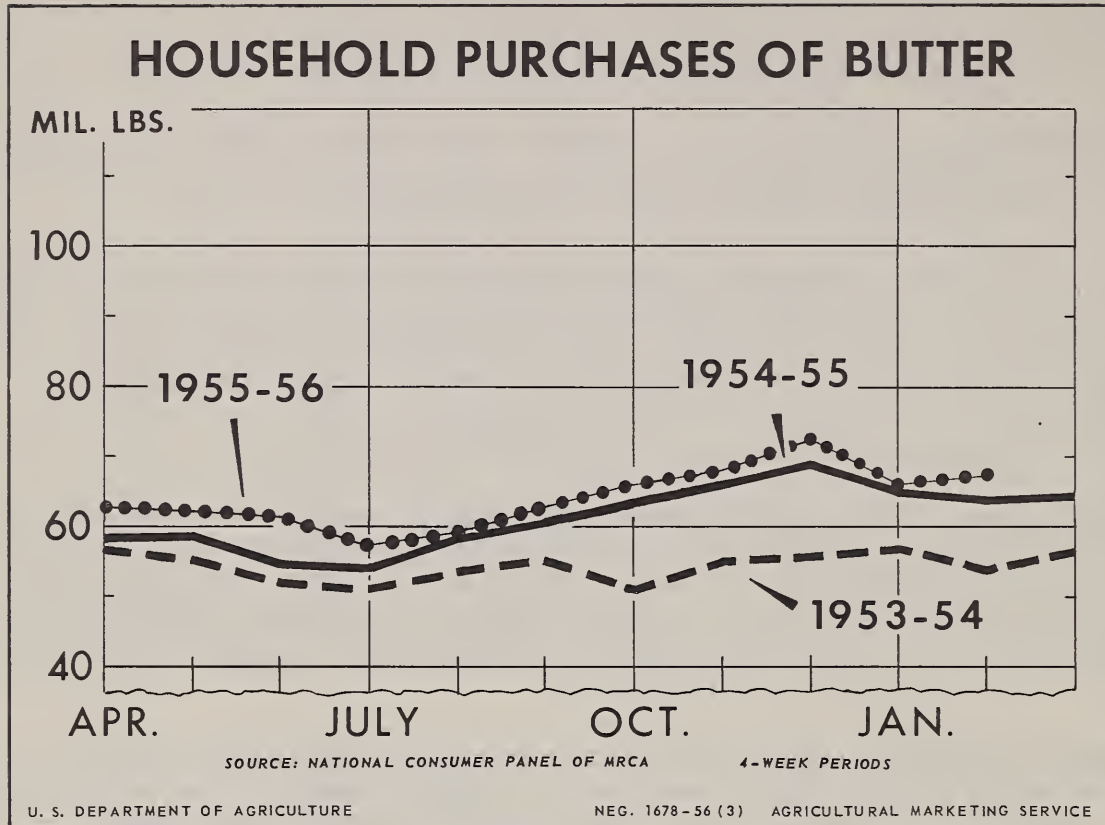


Figure 1

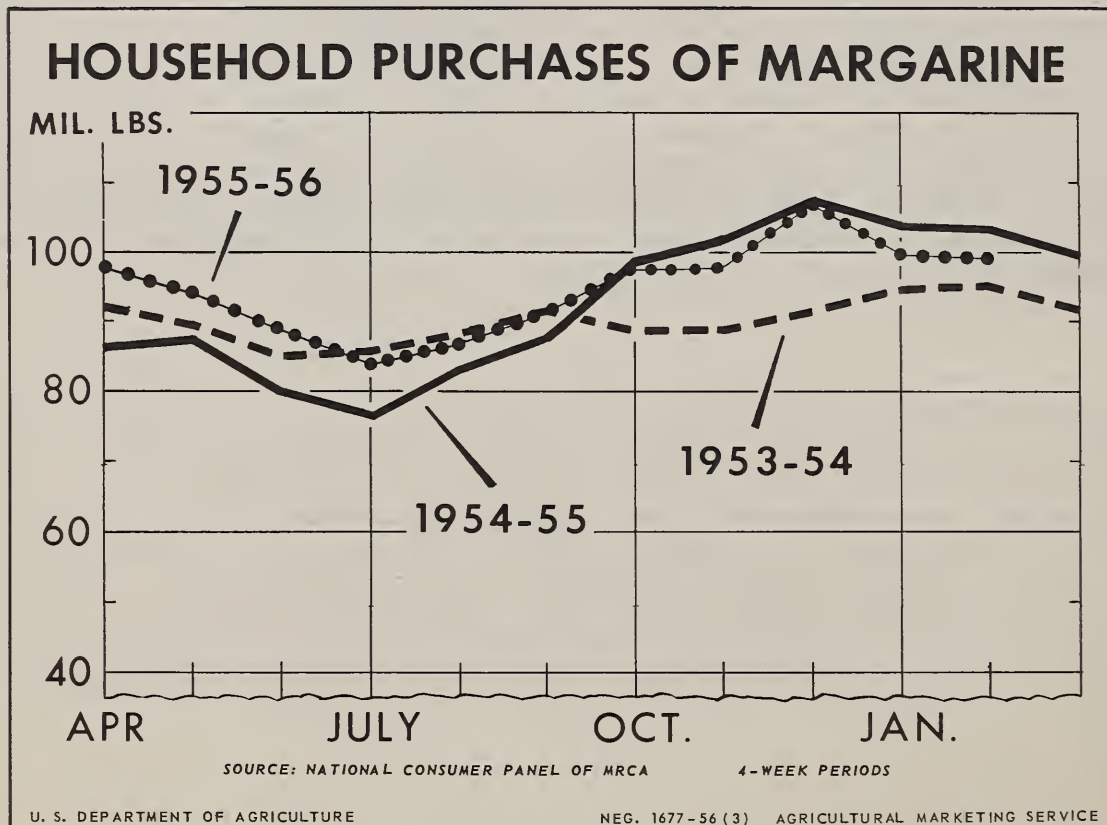


Figure 2

Table 1.--Butter: Household purchases and average price per pound
U. S., 4-week periods

[illegible]

National Consumer Panel of Market Research Corporation of America.

Table 2.--Margarine: Household purchases and average price per pound
U. S., 4-week periods

[illegible]

National Consumer Panel of Market Research Corporation of America.

Table 3.--Cheese: Household purchases and average price per unit,
U. S., 4-week period, February 1956

Type	Percentage of all families buying any type	Quantity purchased			Average price paid per unit	
		Average per purchase	Total	Per 1,000 population		
		Ounces	1,000 pounds	Pounds	Unit	Cents
Natural						
American	<u>1/</u>	13.7	18,530	114.8	Lb.	62.9
Swiss	<u>1/</u>	9.5	3,700	23.0	Lb.	74.3
Cream	<u>1/</u>	6.1	4,220	26.2	3 oz.	14.1
Other	<u>1/</u>	8.3	4,040	25.0	Lb.	78.3
Processed						
Cheese	<u>1/</u>	10.6	9,620	59.6	Lb.	61.2
Cheese foods	<u>1/</u>	23.3	4,980	30.9	Lb.	43.5
Cheese spreads	<u>1/</u>	15.7	8,220	50.9	Lb.	50.0
Natural and Processed	59.8					
Cottage cheese	<u>1/</u>	16.5	40,320	249.9	12 oz.	21.2

1/ Estimated percentage buying each type is supplied in quarterly report.

National Consumer Panel of Market Research Corporation of America.

Table 4.--Natural Cheese: Household purchases and average price, U. S., 4-week periods

Period	Purchases							
	American		Swiss		Cream		Other	
	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55
	<u>pounds</u>	<u>pounds</u>	<u>pounds</u>	<u>pounds</u>	<u>pounds</u>	<u>pounds</u>	<u>pounds</u>	<u>pounds</u>
April-----	17,210	14,910	3,290	3,180	3,530	3,390	3,730	3,320
May-----	16,150	15,310	3,460	2,950	3,790	3,460	3,170	3,590
June-----	16,120	13,910	4,070	3,580	3,250	2,880	3,420	2,860
July-----	14,860	14,160	3,450	3,120	2,990	2,500	2,540	2,950
August-----	15,700	15,010	3,450	2,940	2,830	2,310	2,990	2,940
September-----	16,860	16,140	3,630	3,520	3,120	2,790	3,340	2,950
October-----	17,870	17,280	3,780	3,640	3,380	3,370	3,930	3,520
November-----	17,260	16,950	3,610	3,100	3,500	3,670	3,640	3,560
December-----	16,590	16,800	3,440	3,290	4,020	4,090	3,870	4,070
January-----	16,830	17,270	3,140	3,670	3,780	4,210	3,890	3,920
February-----	18,530	17,920	3,700	3,530	4,220	3,950	4,040	4,240
March-----		18,120		3,860		3,860		3,460
Average price paid								
	Per pound						Per 3 oz.	
	American		Swiss		Other		Cream	
	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55
	<u>Cents</u>	<u>Cents</u>	<u>Cents</u>	<u>Cents</u>	<u>Cents</u>	<u>Cents</u>	<u>Cents</u>	<u>Cents</u>
April-----	62.3	63.6	73.2	78.0	75.4	75.5	14.0	14.1
May-----	63.8	63.0	73.1	76.8	75.8	77.4	14.2	14.3
June-----	63.2	62.3	72.9	75.4	78.7	74.4	14.2	14.3
July-----	63.9	63.0	75.9	75.0	78.2	74.0	14.2	14.4
August-----	63.9	62.9	73.8	75.1	76.4	76.1	14.1	14.4
September-----	63.2	62.0	72.7	74.2	79.6	77.2	14.1	14.2
October-----	62.6	62.0	71.8	72.7	77.8	77.4	14.2	13.7
November-----	62.9	62.8	72.8	74.9	78.2	74.7	14.4	13.5
December-----	64.0	63.0	75.7	75.1	78.4	81.9	14.2	13.9
January-----	63.3	63.3	75.1	72.0	77.9	75.8	14.2	13.7
February-----	62.9	62.8	74.3	72.5	78.3	78.8	14.1	14.2
March-----		63.4		72.1		75.4		14.0

National Consumer Panel of Market Research Corporation of America.

Table 5.--Processed cheese: Household purchases and average price, U. S., 4-week periods

Period	Purchases					
	Processed cheese		Cheese foods		Cheese spreads	
	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-56	1955-56	1954-55
	<u>1,000</u> <u>pounds</u>	<u>1,000</u> <u>pounds</u>	<u>1,000</u> <u>pounds</u>	<u>1,000</u> <u>pounds</u>	<u>1,000</u> <u>pounds</u>	<u>1,000</u> <u>pounds</u>
April-----	9,010	10,740	5,240	9,110	6,410	5,670
May-----	9,640	10,670	4,930	9,020	6,400	6,290
June-----	9,940	10,330	5,210	9,420	6,970	5,450
July-----	9,090	9,900	4,640	7,960	5,940	5,170
August-----	8,820	9,940	4,100	7,580	5,890	5,710
September-----	9,190	10,460	4,560	8,090	6,970	6,000
October-----	9,500	10,000	4,900	8,160	6,750	6,790
November-----	8,580	9,660	4,140	6,360	6,740	6,050
December-----	9,240	9,210	4,800	6,210	6,510	6,130
January-----	9,680	10,020	4,380	6,970	6,780	7,920
February-----	9,620	10,700	4,980	7,250	8,220	8,350
March-----		10,380		6,340		7,800
	Average price paid per pound					
	Processed cheese		Cheese foods		Cheese spreads	
	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55
	<u>Cents</u>	<u>Cents</u>	<u>Cents</u>	<u>Cents</u>	<u>Cents</u>	<u>Cents</u>
April-----	61.5	60.9	45.0	47.1	51.0	57.9
May-----	60.4	60.6	44.7	45.8	50.7	52.0
June-----	59.3	61.2	44.2	45.8	50.6	54.3
July-----	60.8	61.5	44.7	46.7	49.9	53.9
August-----	60.8	61.2	44.7	46.6	49.8	51.9
September-----	60.7	60.1	43.3	45.5	50.8	51.9
October-----	60.4	61.2	43.2	44.8	48.7	52.1
November-----	61.2	61.1	44.5	44.5	49.4	53.7
December-----	61.8	62.0	45.2	46.1	51.6	55.6
January-----	60.4	61.4	44.2	44.9	51.2	51.8
February-----	61.2	61.4	43.5	44.2	50.0	49.8
March-----		60.9		44.1		49.9

Table 6.--Cottage Cheese: Household purchases and average price, U. S., 4-week period

Period	Purchases		Average price paid				Size of	
			Per 12-oz. unit for all purchases		Per actual 12-oz. unit purchases		average purchases	
	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55
	1,000 pounds	1,000 pounds	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Ounces	Ounces
April-----	38,220	37,370	21.2	21.2	22.9	22.7	16.2	15.8
May-----	35,720	36,020	21.2	21.2	23.0	22.5	16.2	15.8
June-----	34,630	35,600	21.0	21.0	22.7	22.7	16.4	15.9
July-----	33,030	34,300	21.0	20.9	22.9	22.7	16.3	15.9
August-----	31,650	32,820	21.2	21.2	23.4	23.0	16.2	15.7
September-----	32,440	31,720	21.3	21.1	23.2	22.8	16.0	15.7
October-----	31,840	32,780	21.3	21.3	23.4	23.0	15.9	15.5
November-----	32,230	32,940	21.2	21.4	23.5	23.1	16.4	15.9
December-----	30,540	30,110	21.4	21.2	23.5	23.1	16.4	16.0
January-----	34,180	34,990	21.4	21.2	23.5	23.2	16.3	16.0
February-----	40,320	38,200	21.2	21.3	23.3	23.2	16.5	15.8
March-----		43,240		21.2		23.0		16.0

Table 7.--Nonfat Dry milk solids: Household purchases and average price per pound, U. S., 4-week periods

Period	Quantity purchased						Average price paid			
	Average per purchase		Total		Per 1,000 population		Per pound for all purchases		Per actual 1-pound unit purchases	
	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55	1955-56	1954-55
	Ounces	Ounces	1,000 pounds	1,000 pounds	Pounds	Pounds	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents
April-----	19.5	21.1	13,500	11,080	83.6	70.2	39.7	38.1	35.4	36.7
May-----	19.9	21.1	13,180	10,880	31.6	68.9	39.5	37.8	35.4	36.1
June-----	20.4	22.6	12,420	9,560	76.9	60.5	39.9	37.3	35.8	35.4
July-----	20.5	23.5	12,140	9,560	75.8	60.1	39.7	36.4	35.8	34.8
August-----	20.0	22.6	11,720	9,410	73.1	59.1	39.6	35.5	35.9	33.7
September----	20.8	22.0	12,230	9,910	76.3	62.3	38.7	36.7	34.9	34.1
October-----	21.3	20.6	12,330	10,860	76.5	67.7	38.7	38.3	35.4	35.0
November-----	21.5	20.3	12,420	10,660	77.0	66.5	39.5	38.5	36.1	35.9
December-----	21.5	19.9	12,880	10,110	79.9	63.1	39.7	39.7	36.6	35.6
January-----	21.1	18.9	12,910	12,360	80.0	77.1	39.6	40.5	36.2	36.1
February-----	21.5	18.8	13,350	13,510	82.7	84.2	39.5	40.3	36.3	35.8
March-----		18.6		13,280		82.8		40.2		35.8

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